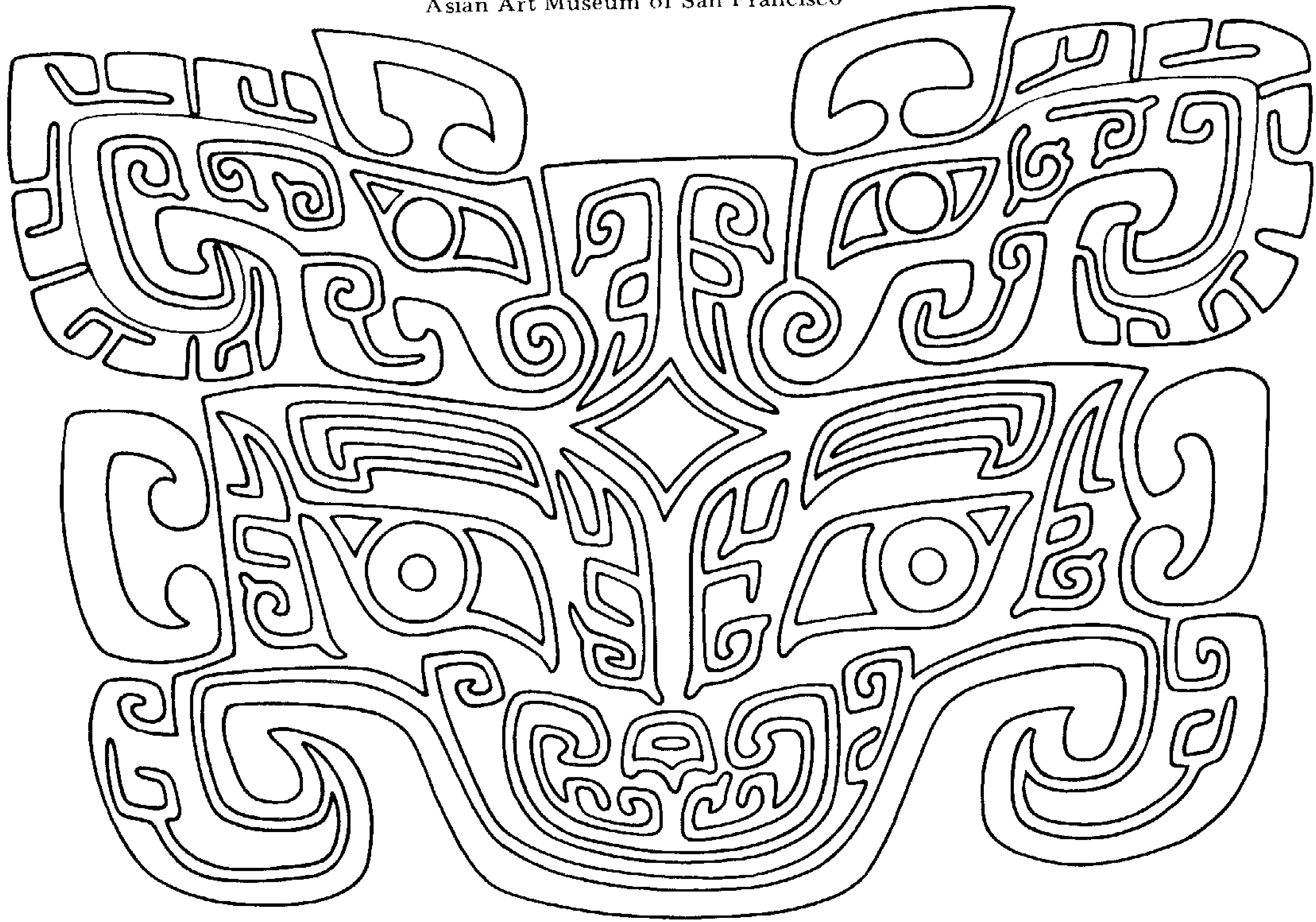
A Coloring Book of

Ancient China



A *t'ao-t'ieh* or demon mask from a Late Shang bronze wine vessel, 13th-11th century B.C. Avery Brundage Collection Asian Art Museum of San Francisco



China

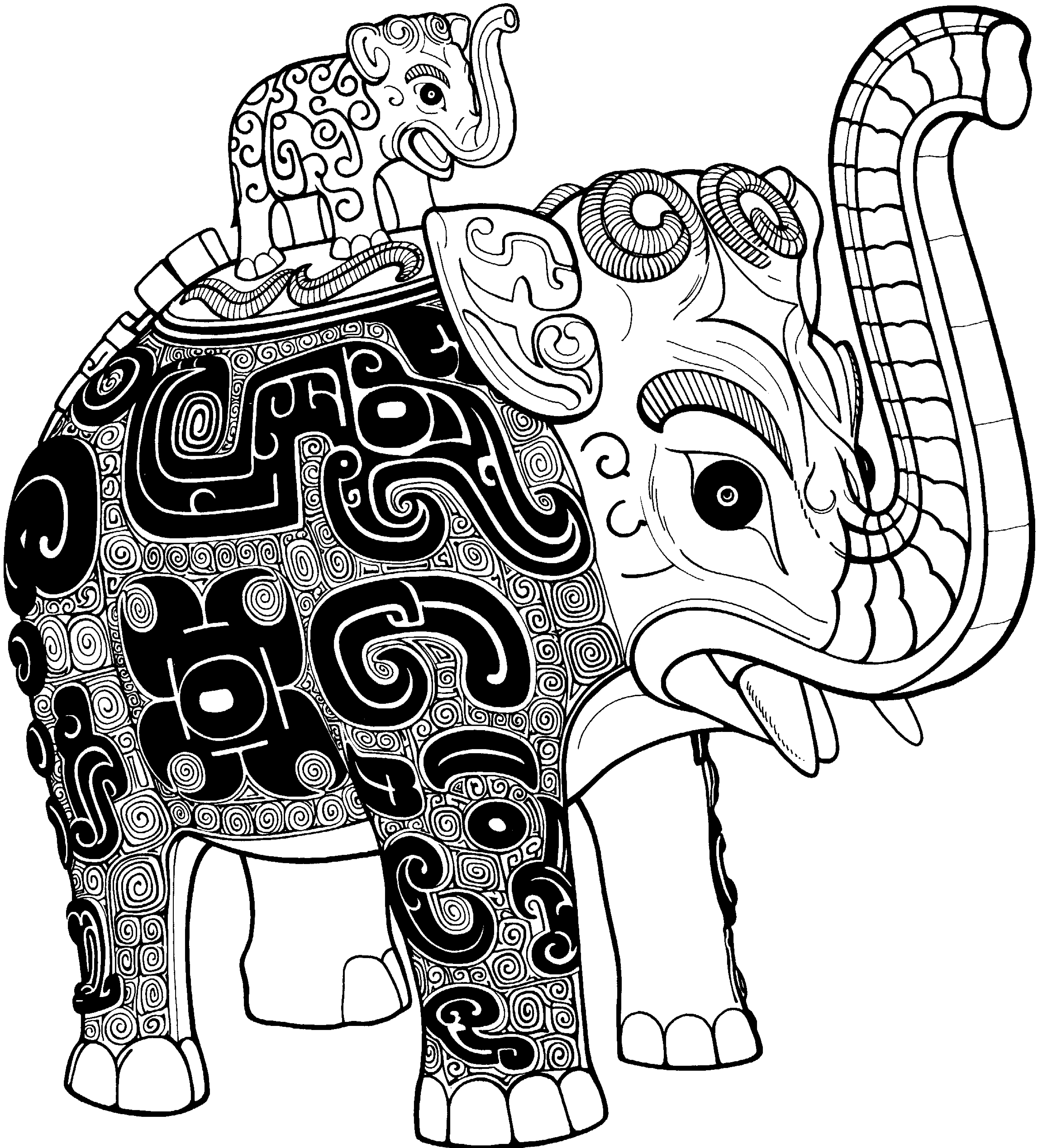
A tiger from a musical stone from the Shang dynasty, excavated at Wu Kuan Ts'un, Anyang, 1950

Bellerophon Books, PO Box 21307, Santa Barbara, CA 93121

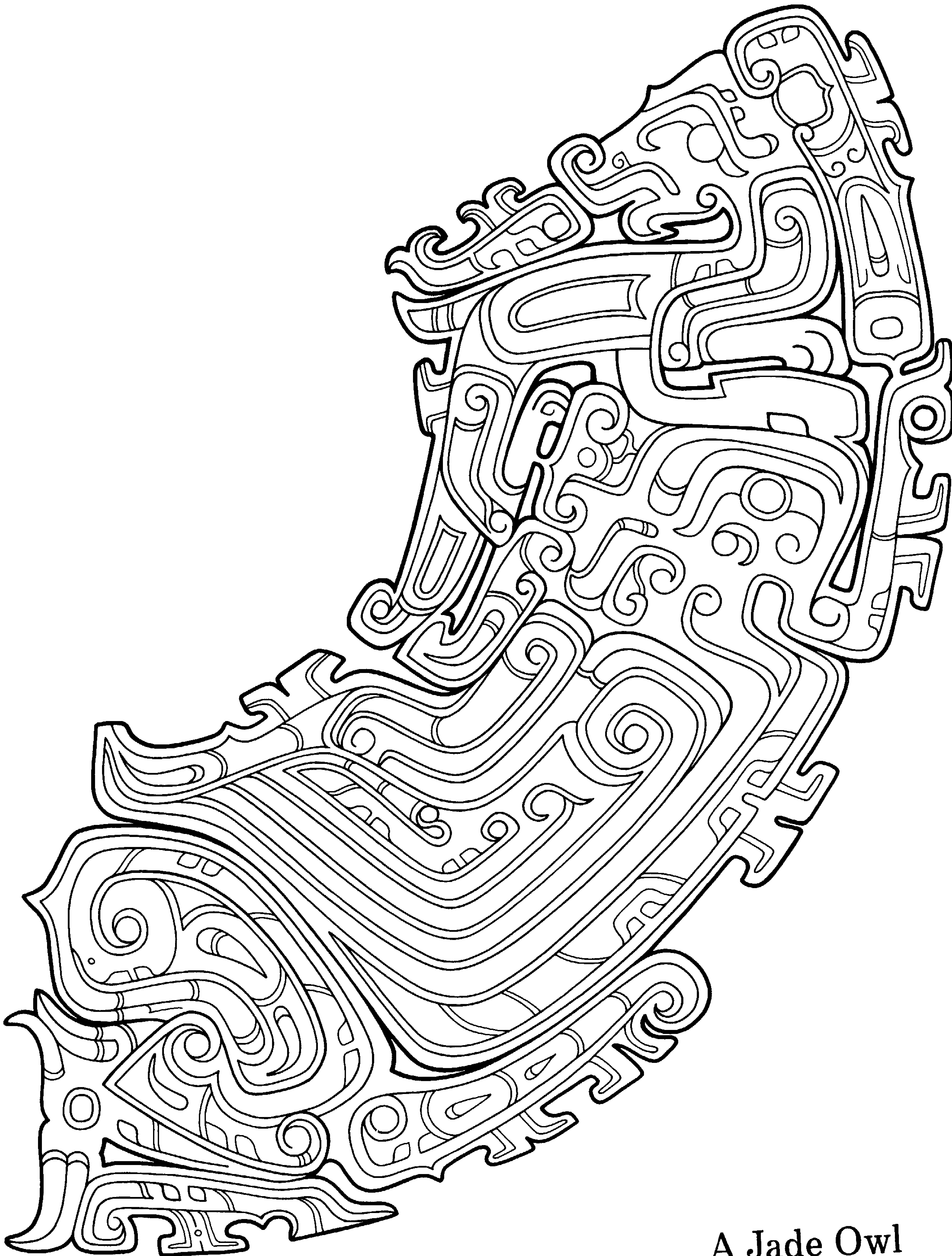
bellerophonbooks.com

On the cover is a horse brought as tribute sometime between 1086 and 1088 by a foreign groom for the Sung emperor, copied by Chao Yung in 1347 from the famous painting of Five Horses by Li Kung-lin, who lived between 1040 and 1106; Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution

Bronze Elephants


A vessel from the Shang dynasty, 12th century B.C. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution



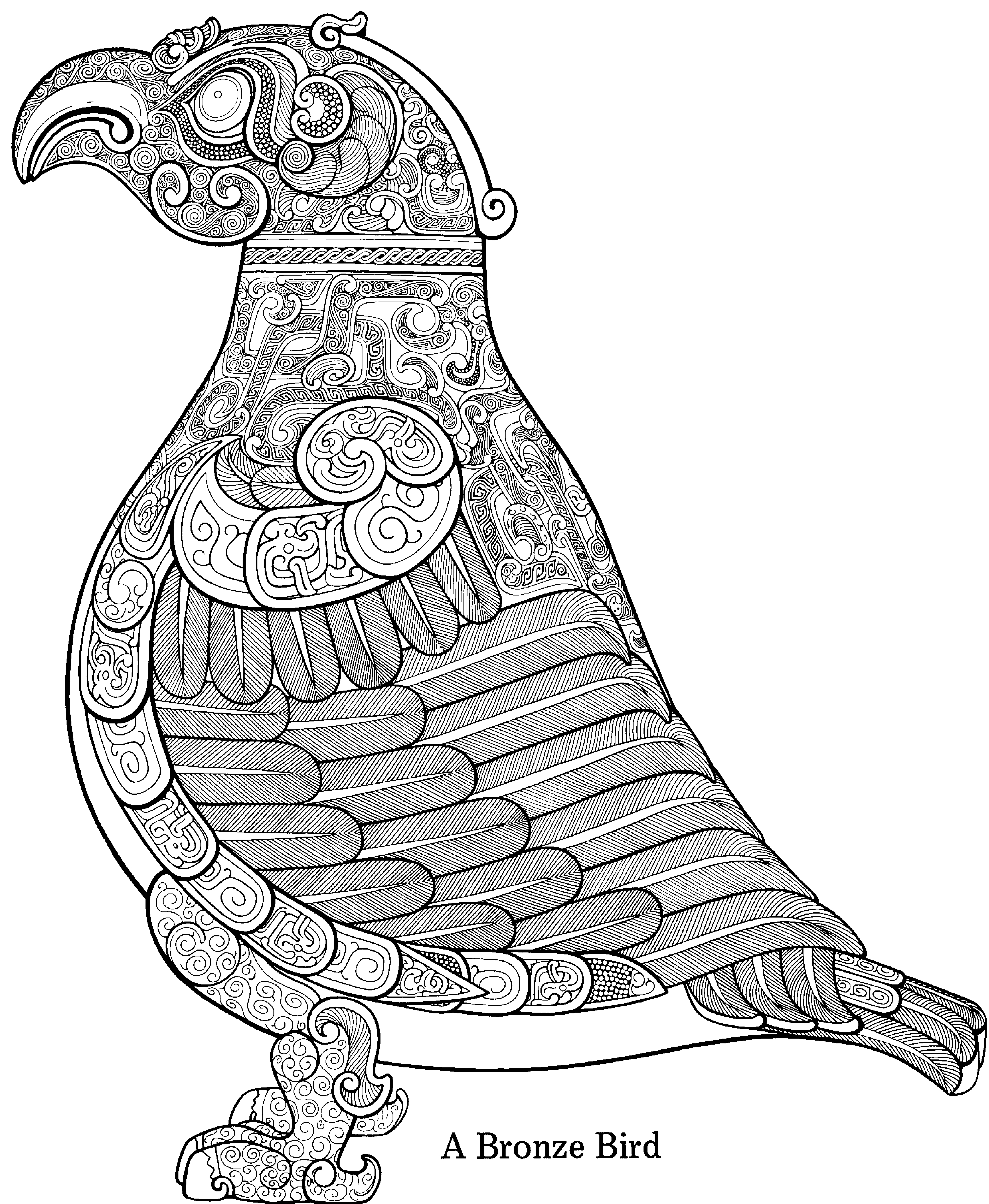
A Jade Owl

Western Chou, c. 10th century B.C. Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City



A Famous Dragon

of bronze, also from the Chou dynasty, c. 5th century B.C. Stochet Collection, Brussels



A Bronze Bird

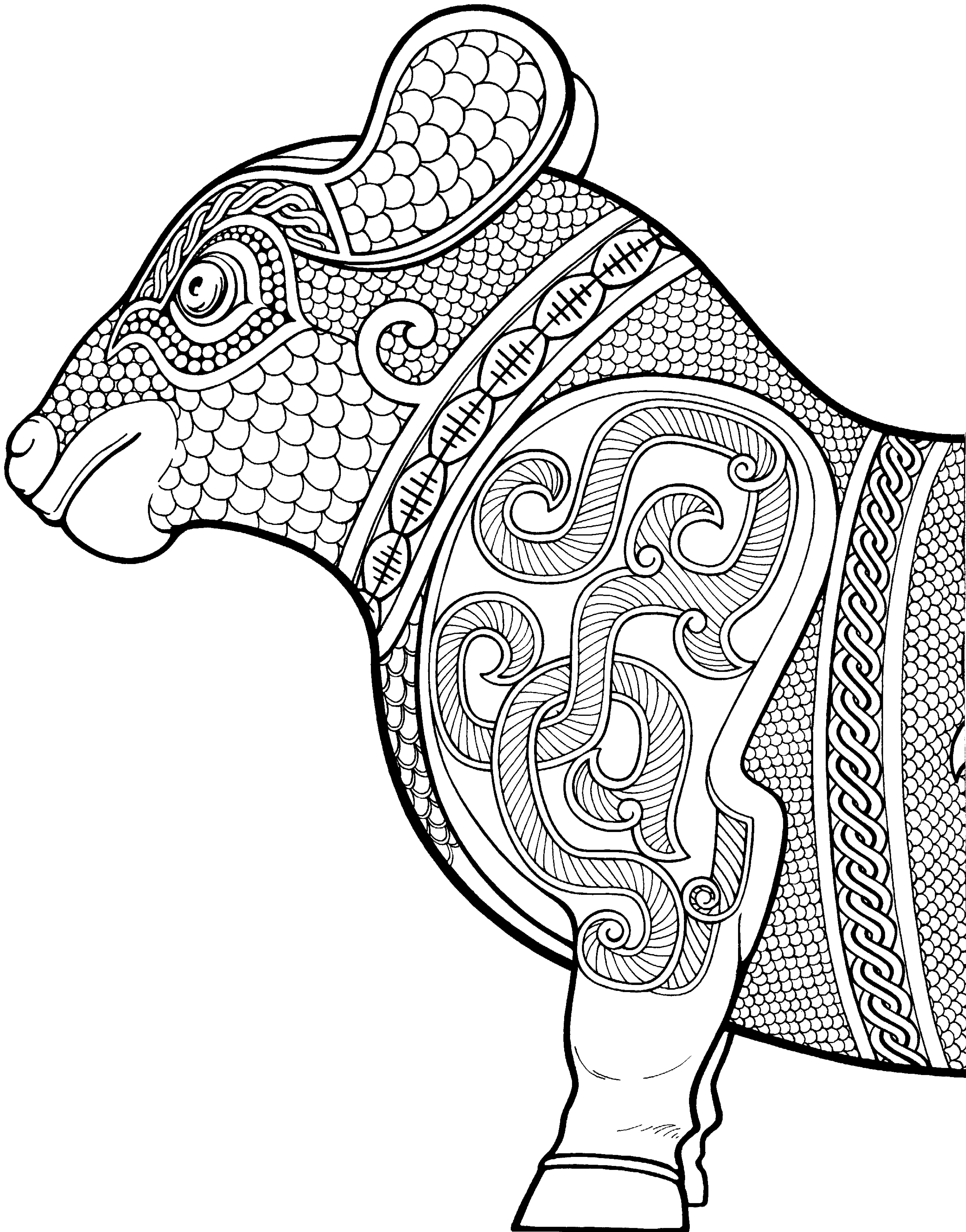
A bronze vessel from the Late Chou dynasty, 5th century B.C. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution

Ancient Hunters

on a *hu,* or ceremonial wine vessel, Late Ch'un-ch'iu or early Warring State, fifth century B.C.

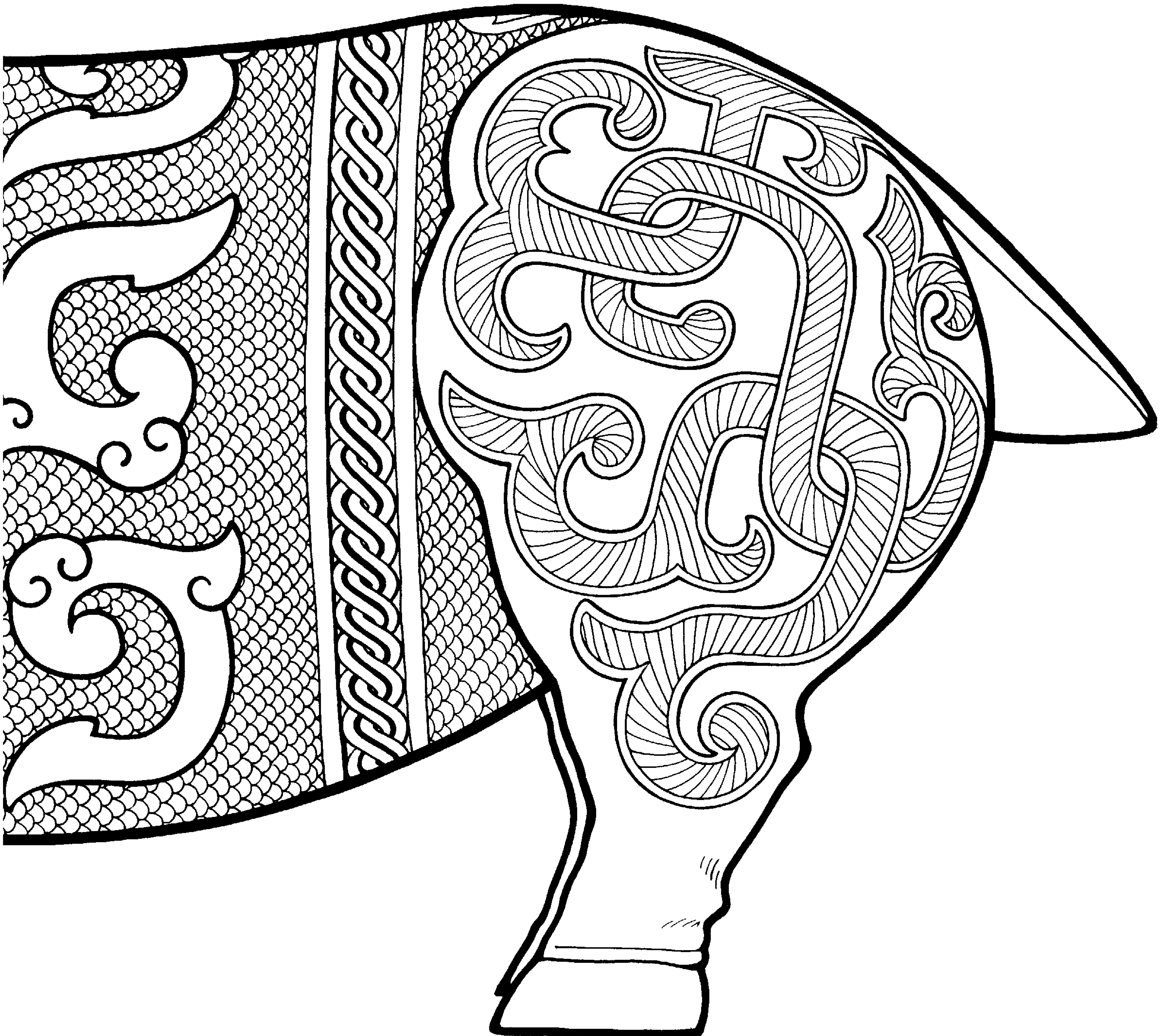


From the Avery Brundage Collection, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco



A bronze animal from the Late Chou dynasty, 5th century B.C. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution

A peculiar animal



A Dragon and a Phoenix




A lady with her pet phoenix and one-legged dragon, from the earliest Chinese painting discovered, 4th-3rd century B.C. Ch'ang-sha, Hunan

Flying Dragons

From a bronze mirror back from the Late Chou dynasty, 3rd century B.C. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



Bronze had been in use since very ancient times in China, but it was not until the fourth century B.C. that mirrors were made of it. Beautifully ornamented, expertly cast mirrors were made of bronze in the next century. The mirror above, made of white bronze, has three bird-tailed dragons, all standing on one leg, ready to fly off in the air to high far-away mountains.



A Bronze Duck

A bronze pitcher, c. 1st century A.D. Private collection

From a lacquer plaque from the Chou or Early Han period, 20 - 50 A.D. Excavated in Lung Sheng Kang, Kuangtung Province, 1953



The crane was a symbol of long life.

Boating on the Lo River, 400 A.D.



Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution



From a scroll illustrating the poem *Nymph of the Lo River* painted in the style of Ku K'ai-chih, c. 400 A.D. by a Sung copyist.



From a stone sarcophagus engraved with Stories of Filial Piety, Northern Wei dynasty, c. 525 A.D.

Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City



In a very early landscape scene, probably taken from a scroll painting, Tung Yung, who sold himself to pay for his father's funeral, is helped by a young lady.

Riding on a Dragon


From a molded brick from a tomb in the Teng District, Honan; Southern dynasties, 5th century A.D.

A magnificent statue of Kuan Yin

Northern Chou dynasty, c. 580
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Kuan Yin, the god of compassion. Her flesh and ornaments were once covered with gold, and her clothes were brilliant with many colors. Even now, with the colors gone, "she exists for us as one of the most splendid and perfect specimens of Chinese Buddhist sculpture that can be seen today." Here you can restore all the colors.



The Emperor Scroll by Yen Li-pen




The Emperor Wu Ti from a scroll of the 7th century A.D., Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Yen Li-pen, the most famous artist of the time of T'ai Tsung, is said to have painted the great scroll of ancient emperors. This scroll, now in Boston, has been called "one of the chief masterpieces of the world." Ch'en Wen-ti, left, is one of the emperors on the scroll; he was probably put there because he "deeply reverenced the Taoist teaching," as the writing on the scroll tells us. Yen often painted pictures of important people for the Emperor T'ai Tsung, but he advised his son to refrain from practicing this art. He had studied literature in his youth as much as anyone, he said, and was unhappy being known just as a painter. Later, Yen was appointed the Emperor's Grand Architect, President of the Board of Works, and finally one of the two State Ministers in 668. He died in 673.



The Emperor T'ai Tsung

626 - 649



National Palace Museum, Taipei

Li Shih-min was a governor's son, and he was sixteen years old. Yang, the emperor, was then very weak, for his empire was falling to pieces. In 618 the ambitious boy Li talked his father into having a revolt. Soon the boy was himself emperor, known to us as the Emperor T'ai Tsung. He and his dynasty, the T'ang, set out to reunite China. In order to do this, they took power away from the quarrelling old war lords by sending them to the edges of the empire. They gave the job of ruling instead to civilian bureaucrats. The good jobs went to those who did very well on their examinations; T'ai Tsung himself was a very good scholar. When he died, he was followed by Wu Chao, who had been one of his lady friends. Wu Chao had the new empress killed and took the job for herself. The wicked Empress Wu ruled for fifty years and was followed by her grandson, Ming Huang.



Confucius

Confucius lived from 554 to 479 B.C. He and his followers had great influence on Chinese life. Among the things they valued most were learning and culture, filial piety and respect for the past.

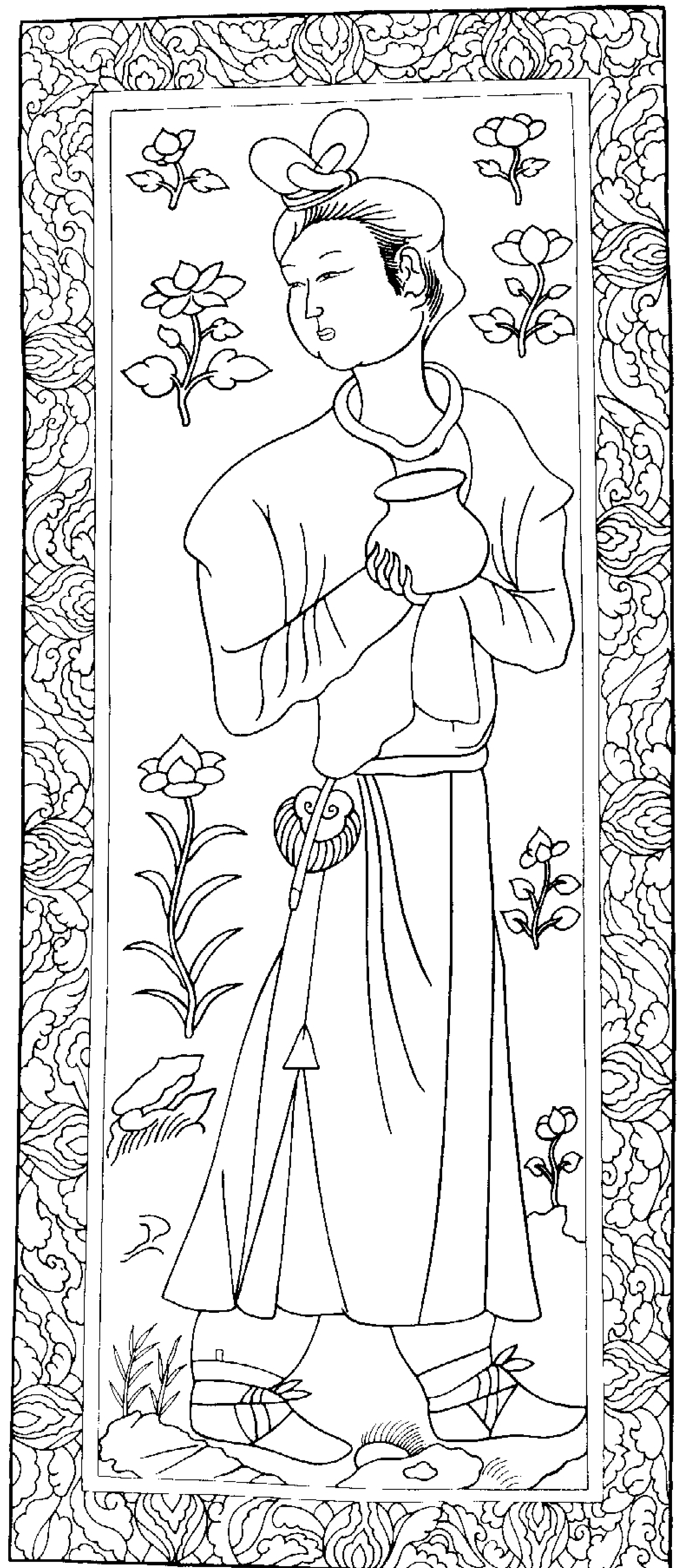
From a stone engraved in the 12th century after a drawing said to be by Wu Tao-tsi, 8th century; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



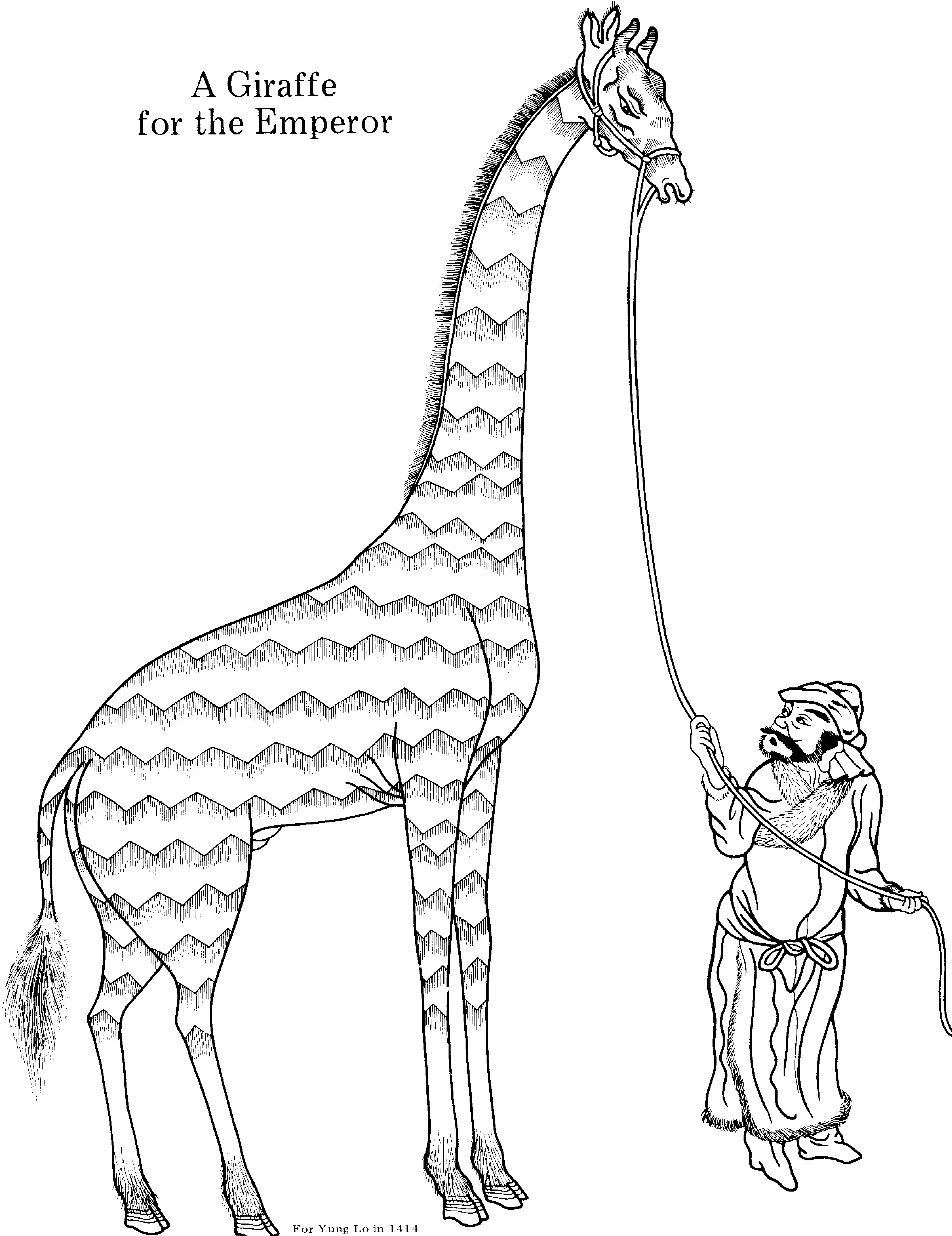
From a wall painting in the tomb of Princess Yung-t'ai,
T'ang dynasty, 706 A.D. Liang-shan, Chien District, Shensi

Ladies of the Court of the Empress Wu

The Empress Wu, who reigned from 713 to 755 A.D., was rather tough and bloodthirsty. These ladies were painted in the recently-excavated tomb of a noblewoman put to death by the famous empress. You can read more about the wicked deeds of the Empress Wu (and many others) in our *Infamous Women Paper Dolls.*



A stone from the same time (708) from Chang-an

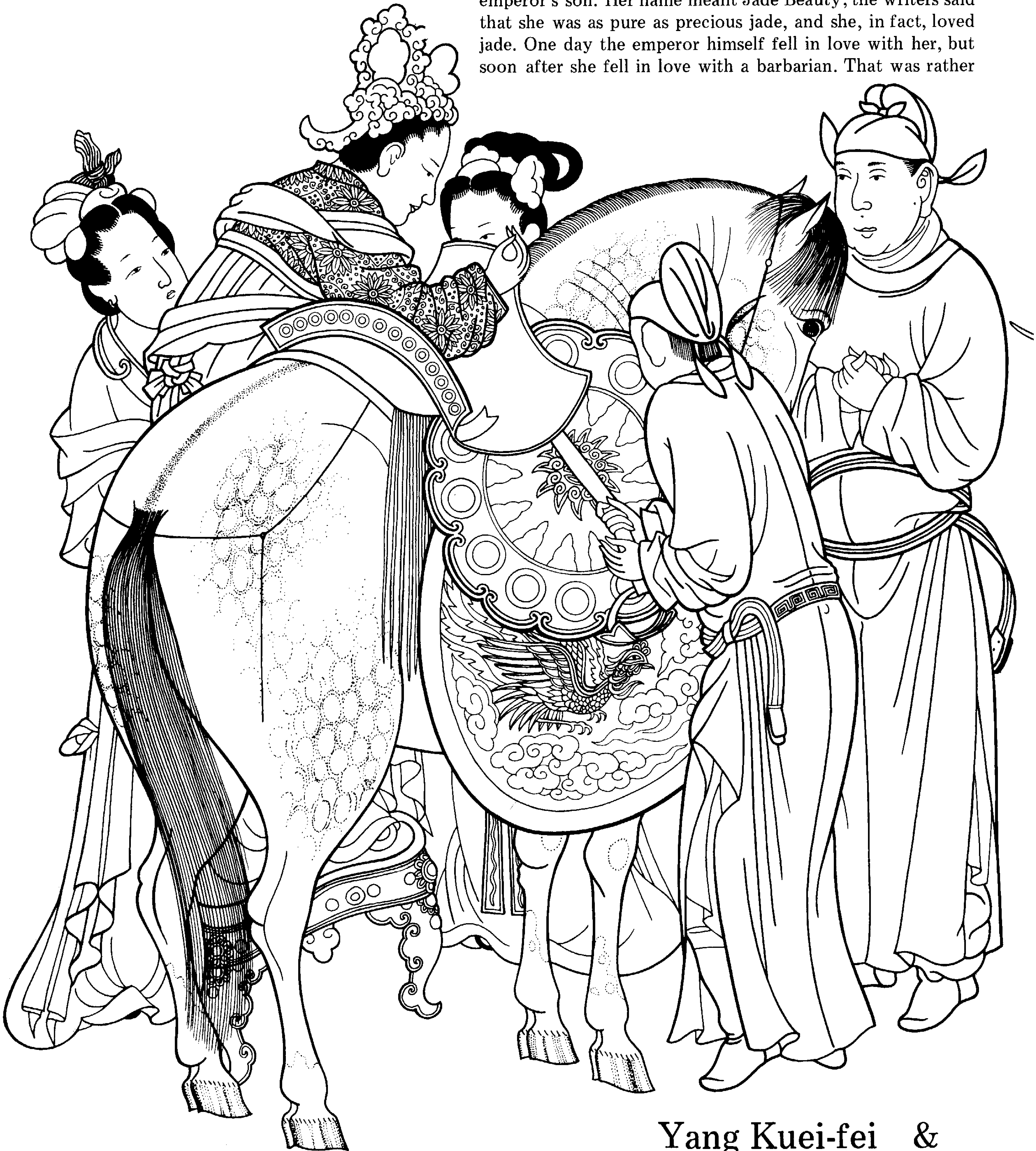

A Giraffe
for the Emperor
For Yung Lo in 1414

& an Ibex from afar



Tribute for the Emperor T'ai Tsung, by Chou Fang; National Palace Museum, Taipei

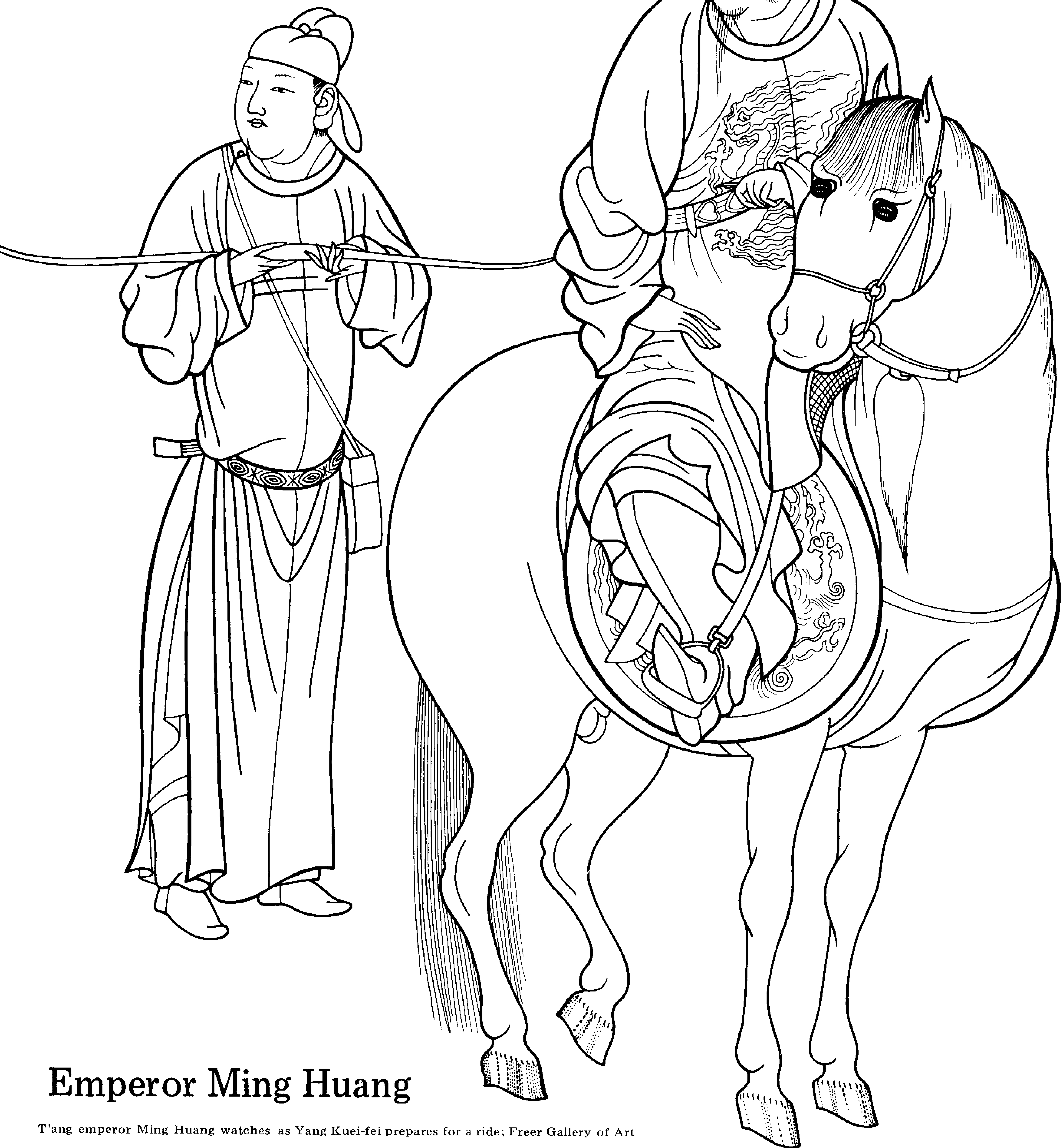
Ming-huan was an emperor of the T'ang dynasty who ruled from 713 to 756 A.D. Yang Kuei-fei had been married to the emperor's son. Her name meant Jade Beauty; the writers said that she was as pure as precious jade, and she, in fact, loved jade. One day the emperor himself fell in love with her, but soon after she fell in love with a barbarian. That was rather



Yang Kuei-fei &

Yang Kuei-fei mounts a horse, from a painting by Ch'ien Hsuan, 13th century A.D. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington

naughty! Her bold lover began a rebellion against the emperor. The emperor retreated and took Yang Kuei-fei with him. But the emperor's loyal guards were so upset with Yang Kuei-fei that her days were numbered. The emperor mourned much after her death, and so have people ever since; it was called the everlasting wrong.



Emperor Ming Huang

T'ang emperor Ming Huang watches as Yang Kuei-fei prepares for a ride; Freer Gallery of Art

Yang Kuei-fei's Sisters

riding to her rescue? Perhaps.

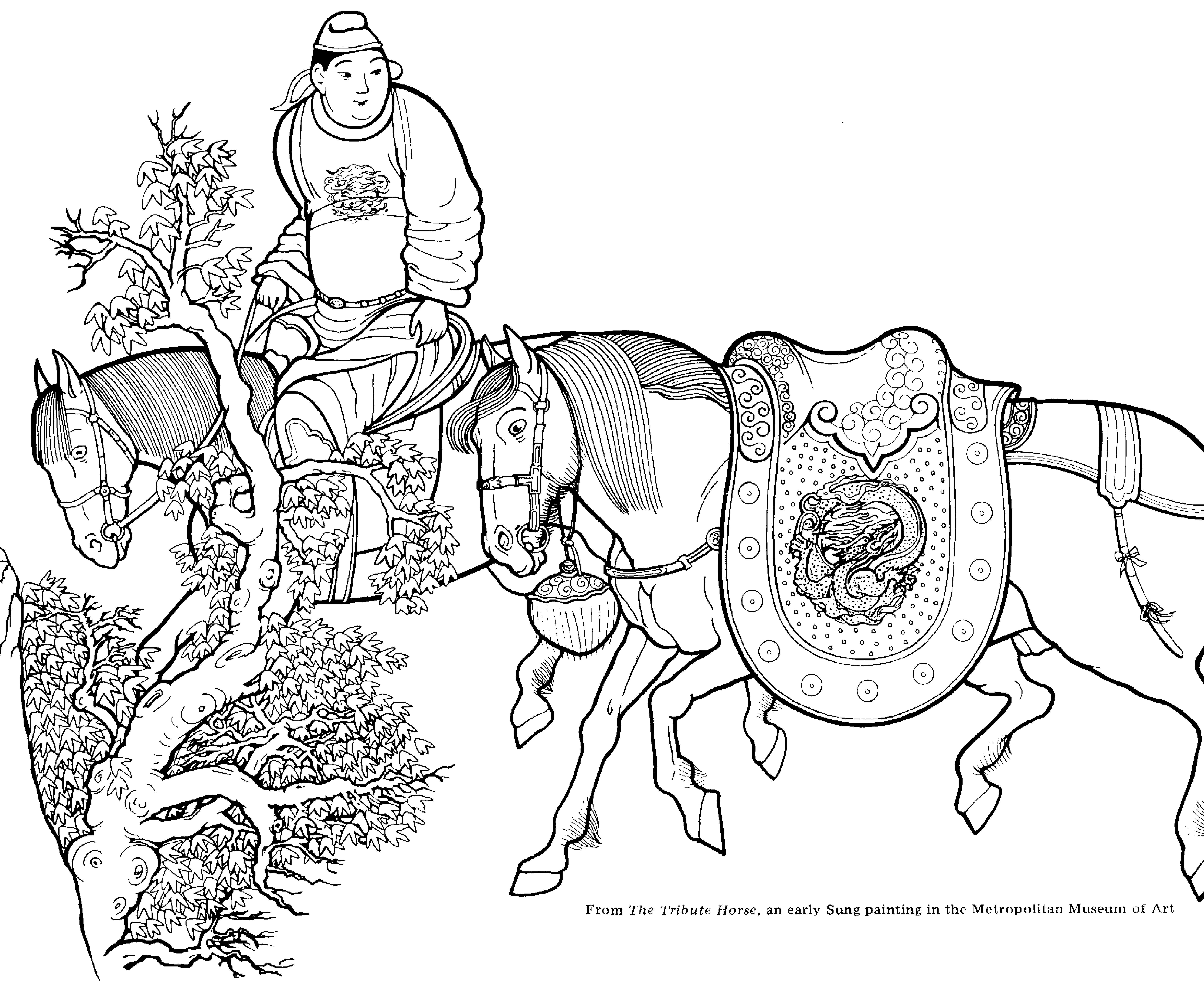


Lady Kuo-kuo from a Sung copy of a scroll said to be by Chang Hsüan, 8th century; National Palace Museum, Taipei



Yang Kuei-fei's Horse

But there was no more Yang Kuei-fei.



From *The Tribute Horse*, an early Sung painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art



From a detail of that most famous of landscapes, *Emperor Ming Huang's Journey to Shu*, 756 A.D. National Palace Museum, Taipei



Poor Emperor Ming Huang

Yang Kuei-fei would never ride with him again.



A Lion with Wings

from the Sung dynasty, inlaid with gold and silver, 11th or 12th century; British Museum

The Emperor Chao K'uang-yin



National Palace Museum, Taipei

The T'ang Dynasty fell in 907, and Five Dynasties followed until 960. In that year, Chao K'uang-yin founded the Sung Dynasty. Great artists worked during Sung times, and one of the greatest was an emperor, Hui Tsung. But he spent too much time painting, and not enough watching his enemies. These were the Jurchen Tartars, called the Chin Dynasty when they took over the Northern Sung capital. But a Sung ruler fled and set up a new Southern Sung capital.

Kublai Khan

National Palace Museum, Taipei



The Mongols invaded China and destroyed the Chin Dynasty in 1234. Their leader, Kublai Khan, next conquered the Southern Sung, too. His dynasty was called the Yüan. It was during his time that the Polo Brothers visited China.

The Boy on a Goat


A Boy-Rishi, one of the Taoist genii, attributed to Han Kan, Southern Sung; British Museum


An interesting experiment



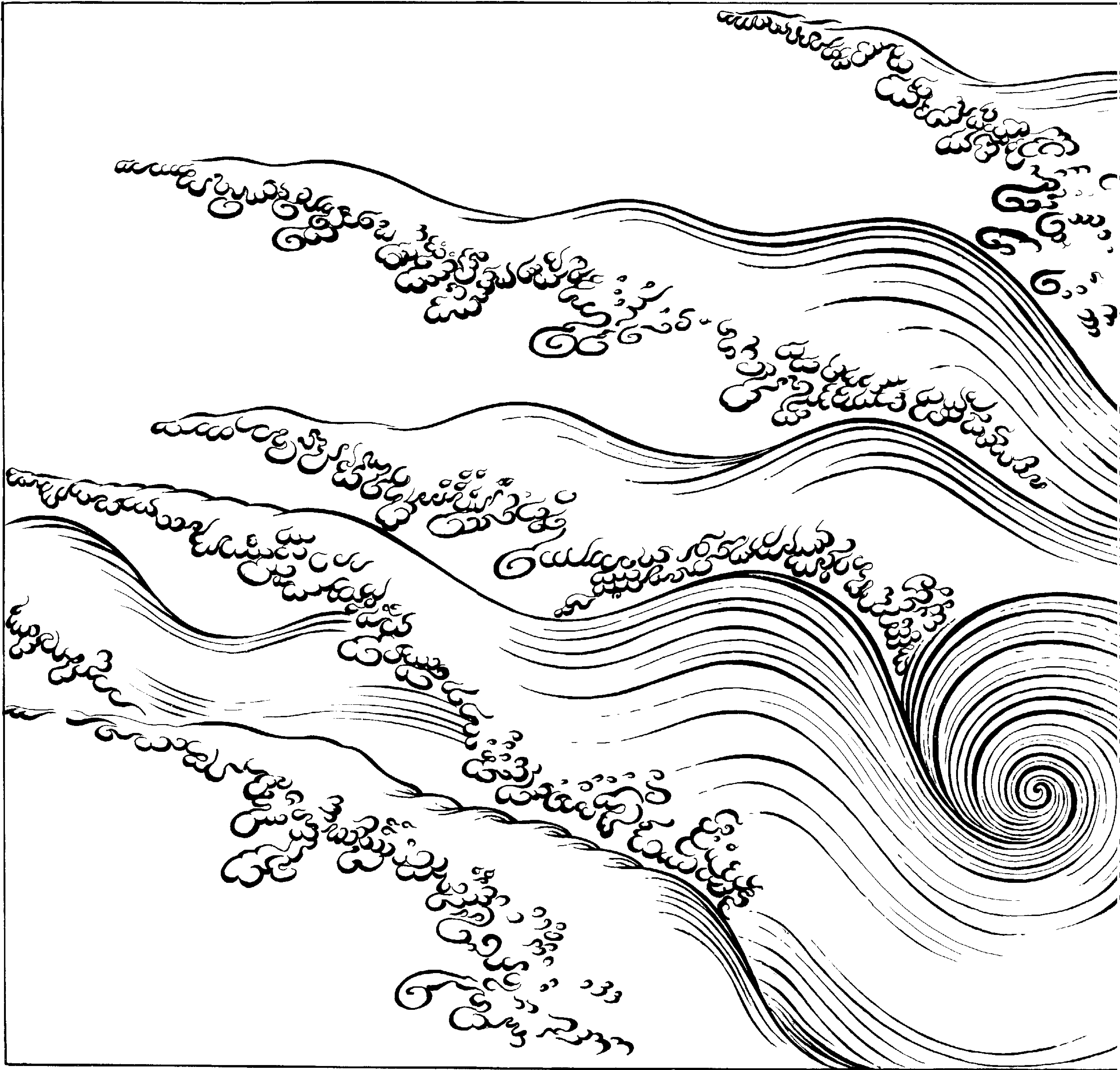
After Su Han-ch'en, 1119 - 1162, Sung dynasty; National Palace Museum, Taipei



THE RED CLIFF (from a poem by Su Shih, in the boat) painted by Li Sung, c. 1190 - 1230; Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City

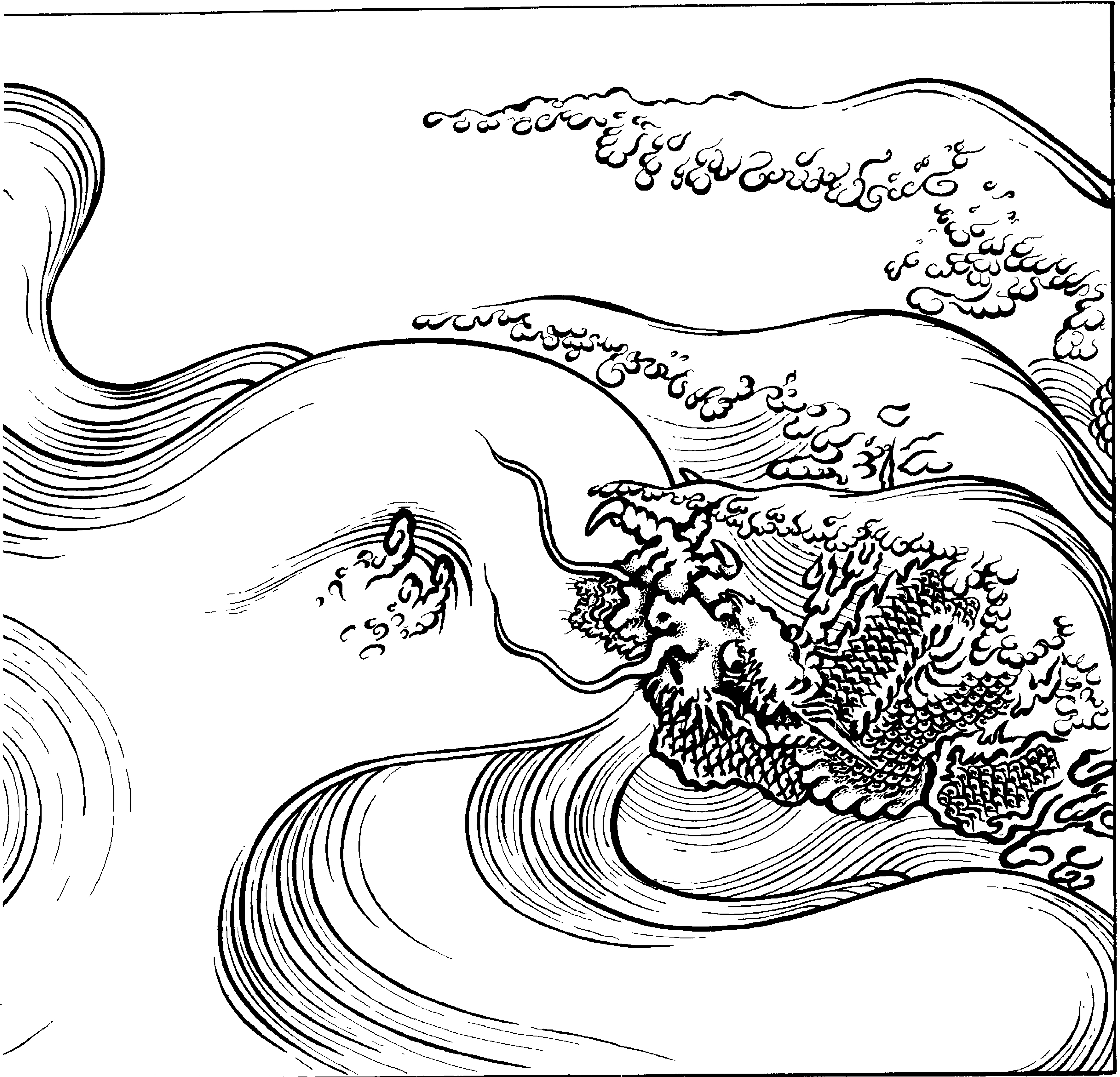


Ch'en Jung painted the famous Nine Dragon scroll in 1244 A.D. Besides writing the date, the artist tells about the Duke of Yeh, who was very fond of dragons. He liked them so much that he had them painted on all the walls



of his house, and on all of his furniture. One day, sure enough, a real live dragon looked in the Duke's window to see what was going on. The Duke turned white with fright and quickly ran away! The artist also tells about

Chang Seng-yu, a sixth-century artist who painted dragons in temples, but always left out the eyes. He said that if the eyes were put in, the dragons would fly away. Everyone laughed at this, so Chang did paint in some eyes.



From the Nine Dragon Scroll, 13th century; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston


Suddenly, amidst thunder and lightning, the dragons flew away and the walls they had been on fell to pieces. Ch'en tells too about the valleys of Lung-men on the Yellow River—the dragons' favorite haunts— above.



Wen-shu

Wen-shu was a Buddhist Bodhisattva, Manjushri. (A bodhisattva is a being who has given up his own chance of entering nirvana in order to help save others.) She wandered about disguised as a poor musician, reading her sutra.

The Bodhisattva Wen-shu, from a painting in the *Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst*, Cologne; c. 1300.

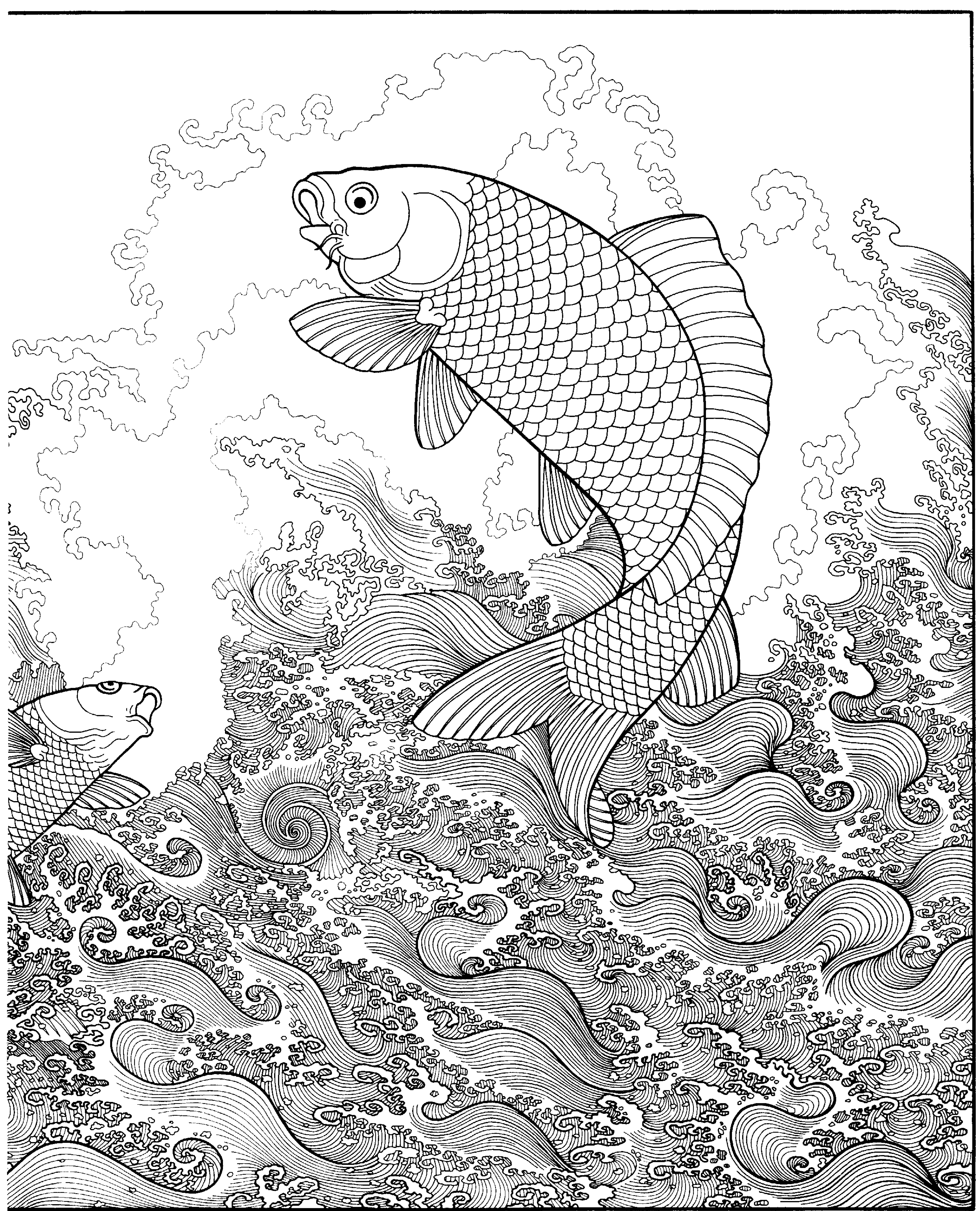


Manjushri the Bodhisattva riding on a blue lion, Yüan dynasty; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Golden Carp & a Porcelain Lady



A porcelain lady of the Court of K'ang-hsi, 17th century; University Museum, Philadelphia



From a late Sung or Yüan scroll in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston




Blazing Banners
From an 18th century Taoist scroll in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



When the schoolmaster sleeps

From a Ming painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art


Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art

Bellerophon

CHINA



